

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-6 and 8-11 are pending in the application. Claim 25 is new. Support for claim 25 can be found throughout the application (see, for example, Figure 3). No new matter has been added.

RESPONSE TO CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1, 3-6 and 8-11 are rejected as being anticipated by Smak (WO 00/00014). The Examiner contends that Smak discloses “a tray (1) comprising a plurality of non-tapered cavities (2) each having a rib (4) protruding into each cavity as claimed; further each cavity is substantially symmetrically open-ended at both ends (see figure-1) as claimed.” The Examiner further contends that Smak teaches all the other limitations of the pending claims. The Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants respectfully assert that Smak does not teach a tray wherein each cavity is substantially symmetrically open-ended at both ends. In other words, Smak does not teach cavities where the top opening is substantially the same as the bottom opening. For example, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 of Smak, the Smak cavities have triangular ribs which protrude into the cavity which results in top and bottom openings as depicted below.



TOP



BOTTOM

In contrast, the top and bottom openings of the cavities of instant claims must be substantially symmetrical. See, for example, Figure 3 of the instant application, which has a top and bottom as depicted below.



TOP



BOTTOM

Because the pending claims require cavities which are substantially symmetrically at both ends, the Applicants respectfully assert that Smak does not anticipate any of the pending claims. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(b) rejections of claims 1, 3-6 and 8-11 based on the Smak reference.

FEES

The Applicants believe that there are no required fees in connection with the filing of this paper. Nevertheless, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any additional required fee to our Deposit Account, No. **06-1448** reference **RCX-022.01**.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment and remarks, it is believed that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections. If a telephone conversation with Applicants' Agent would expedite prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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